



**HOME BUILDERS & REMODELERS ASSOCIATION
OF CONNECTICUT, INC.**

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*Your Home
Is Our
Business*

**Housing Committee
Public Hearing
Testimony
March 1, 2022**

To: Chairmen Rep. Phipps, Sen. Lopes, Ranking Members Rep. Polletta, Sen. Cicarella, and distinguished Members of the Housing Committee

From: Jim Perras, CEO

Regarding: Testimony on Raised S.B. No. 168 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A RIGHT TO HOUSING.

The Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Connecticut (HBRA-CT) is a professional trade association with almost nine hundred business members statewide, employing tens of thousands of Connecticut residents. Our association of small businesses is comprised of residential and commercial builders, land developers, remodelers, general contractors, subcontractors, suppliers and those businesses and professionals that provide services to our diverse industry. We build between 70% to 80% of all new homes and apartments in Connecticut each year and engage in countless home remodeling projects.

The HBRA-CT agrees with the premise of this legislation that all Connecticut residents have a fundamental right to safe and affordable housing regardless of one's socio-economic status. Furthermore, the HBRA also agrees, it is imperative that all state agencies review existing regulations and policies and craft future policy and regulation to ensure state actions promote this fundamental right.

Section 2 of SB 168 would establish a right to housing committee to review existing and proposed housing policies. Hearing from individuals that represent historically disadvantaged and disenfranchised groups is especially important and essential to charting a future where no one goes homeless in Connecticut. But the **HBRA-CT respectfully suggests the committee should also include developers, land use experts and housing advocates that are familiar with existing policies and regulations that artificially drive up the cost of housing. In addition, an important part of the committee's charge should include a review of agency policies, procedures, and regulations that unduly slow housing production and drive-up costs.**

The HBRA-CT would also suggest that this legislation include language that applies to legislative activity. SB 168 should include language that would require all raised bills

and proposed regulations include a housing affordability analysis to be completed prior to passage or adoption.

So much of what impacts access to adequate housing stems from policies and regulations that prevent the private sector from building the housing stock that meets the diverse needs of Connecticut residents. For instance, we know that one quarter of the cost associated with building a new single-family home comes from federal, state, and local regulations. That percentage increases to a third of the cost regarding multi-family construction. For over a decade, the residential construction industry in Connecticut has been building housing units of all types at recession levels. In fact, housing production numbers have not been lower since 2011. These inadequate housing production numbers have made the American dream of homeownership that much more difficult to attain in Connecticut, especially for those on the margins. In turn, the low housing stock numbers are contributing to the skyrocketing rents we are currently experiencing. Those that can least afford it, are stuck in aging and inefficient housing units that cost more to heat and maintain. Demand and need for all types of housing has arguably never been higher. **SB 168 should be amended to focus directly on executive and legislative branch activities that drive up the costs of housing to achieve the best results for the communities the underlying bill seeks to assist.**

Thank you, for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 168.